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CURRENT LITERATURE

MINOR NOTICES

British lichens.—The first edition of part first of this work appeared in 1894. The catalogue was done by JAMES M. CROMBIE, who accomplished an excellent piece of work, viewed from the standpoint of the lichenists of his day and the generation preceding him. Part second was to have appeared shortly from the pen of CROMBIE, but his death prevented. Later the task was continued by ANNIE LORRAIN SMITH, and the second part appeared in 1911, following in part the methods of the author of the first part, on which it was an improvement as a whole. In 1918 the revision of part first by Miss SMITH¹ appeared.

The volume contains an introduction dealing with the nature of the lichen and a catalogue of the British lichens (pp. 520). The work of the original author has been thoroughly revised, and the volume contains much new material and marked changes in classification. There are usable keys, and the descriptions have dropped most of the antiquated phraseology of the lichenist of the recent past. They will be more acceptable, therefore, to the botanist of today, who necessarily has been somewhat appalled at the technical language of the lichenist. The 71 plates represent a large amount of work and will be found helpful to the student. Unfortunately, the author's conception of the nature of the lichen is wrong and therefore unfortunate in a work of first rank. In America, at least, and we believe in Europe as well, there has been a marked recent trend of opinion among students of lower plants to the effect that the dual hypothesis regarding lichens is untenable, and that the lichen must be a fungus after all, parasitic on an alga. However, the introduction on the nature of the lichen is a very minor feature of the work, and the publication of this revision gives us from the pen of one person a complete, creditable, and very useful catalogue of the British lichens. Although the catalogue in two volumes deals primarily with the lichens of a limited area, the work will be found useful in the study of the lichens of America and other regions.—BRUCE FINK.

American gall insects.—FELT² has published an excellent and usable key to the American gall insects. It is arranged with reference to the host plants on which the galls occur and will be of great value to every botanist who has

¹ SMITH, ANNIE LORRAIN, A monograph of the British lichens. Vol. I. 8vo. pp. xxiv+520. *pls.* 71. *figs.* 11. The British Museum. 1918.

² FELT, E. P., Key to American gall insects. N.Y. State Museum Bull. 200. pp. 310. *pls.* 16. 1917.